

CUCUG

The Status Register

March 1999

The March News

The March Meeting

The next CUCUG meeting will be held on our regular third Thursday of the month: Thursday, March 18th, at 7:00 pm, at the Bresnan Community Center. Direction to the Bresnan are on the back of this newsletter.

The March 18 meeting will be one of CUCUG's split SIG meetings. The Amiga SIG will hear what our members that attended the Amiga99 show in St. Louis have to say about the show. The Mac SIG will have a Question and Answer session, with Richard and Emil promising a few surprises, as well. Both SIGs' members are encouraged to bring in anything they'd like to show or share.

Welcome New Members

We would like to welcome the new members who have joined us in the last month: Paul Pereira (C64/128, A500/2000/3000, ClonePC), Keith Burton (C64, A2000/3000, ClonePC), Joseph W. Solinski (C64, Amiga 500, Amiga 3000), Ario L. Franzetti (A3000, ClonePC), Wayne Henry Zemelka (A2000/4000), Roger T. Barber Jr (ClonePC), and J. Leslie Turriff (A1200/4000, ClonePC).

We'd also like to welcome back returning members Richard D. McConnell, James R. Schwartz, Sandy Secrest, John D. Turner, Mike Latinovich, Lloyd LeMere, Susan Kraybill, Kathryn S. Weisbaum, David W. Ferguson, Quentin L. Barnes, Richard A. Caputo, Fowler W. Martin, Sally Peters, Anbjorn Myren, David B. Hydock, and William C. Bonner.

Amiga President Jim Collas Addresses Amiga99

Please Note that this story was constructed from a rather fragmented IRC session. A fast-typing Chris Wallace was attending the keynote address Friday night and passing on his notes in real time to the 60-70 people in the IRC channel, sponsored by the User Group Network. While some details may be missing or blurry, this is basically the gist of Collas' presentation.

March 12, 1999 - Jim Collas, the newly named president of Amiga Inc. and formerly the senior vice president of Product Development and Management for Amiga's parent company, Gateway, addressed an enthusiastic crowd gathered at the Henry VIII Hotel, site of the Amiga99 show in St. Louis, Mo. tonight.

According to Amiga fans reporting from the hotel, Mr. Collas outlined the future plans of Amiga Inc. along with the future plans of the Amiga as a platform. The new Amiga operating environment will be dubbed "AmigaSoft" and the first version, AmigaSoft 4.0 alpha (for developers) will be released in September with the final 4.0 version arriving late in the fourth quarter of 1999. AmigaSoft will feature a revolutionary software architecture (supporting multiple processors) and a full development environment. AmigaSoft 5.0 beta will debut late in the year with the final version making its way to release in the second quarter of 2000.

Mr. Collas described the new machine as a full information appliance environment. Apparently Amiga Inc. has some hefty sales goals for the new machines (information appliances). Collas actually mentioned 20-30 million units might be ultimately sold, but admitted that they would need to focus on the proper strategies to achieve this.

Going forward, Collas promised a more active public relations stance with the current Amiga community. They plan to make continuous progress updates available on the Amiga Inc. web site and offer better communications, more involvement in the community, more press releases and forums, Amiga community support programs for developers, users, magazines, resellers, distributors and trade shows.

Collas asserted that much has changed at Amiga Inc. The division now has the full support of parent company Gateway who has installed dedicated senior executive leadership. They have also fully dedicated resources and the effort will be fully funded. Collas made a personal commitment to those assembled to listen attentively and act aggressively. Amiga Inc. will be hiring several senior positions, to be announced within 30-60 days.

In closing, Collas said that there is a new computer revolution on the rise and Amiga can lead this revolution and make history again. He said that we must keep the spirit of Amiga alive and become a strong and single community in order to succeed. Collas said that he intends to listen to the Amiga community.

His presentation was greeted with a standing ovation from those at the event.

The schedule:

OS 3.5 - august 99
AmigaSoft 4.0 alpha - sept 99
AmigaSoft 4.0 final - late fourth quarter 99
AmigaSoft 5.0 beta - fourth quarter 99
AmigaSoft 5.0 final - second quarter 2000

The management:

President and CEO - Jim Collas
VP Sales and Marketing - Petro Tyschtschenko
VP Engineering - Allen Havemose
VP Marketing and OEM Sales - Jim Von Holle
VP Product Strategies and Planning - Jeff Shindler
PR and Evangelist - Bill McEwen

OS3.5 Debuts

Haage & Partner and their partner companies gave a first demonstration of OS3.5 on March 5, 1999 at AMIGA International, Inc.'s office in Langen, Germany. Thomas Raukamp of "AMIGA OS" magazine attended the demonstration. "AMIGA OS" will have a report on that first demonstration in its April issue.

Haage and Partner also showed the first parts of their work in progress at Amiga 99 in St. Louis, on March 13 and 14. Developers and Dealers got to see a special selection of seminars on a variety of subjects, including OS 3.5 on Friday the 12. Haage and Partner showed the OS work to the public in Amiga's booth as well as in special seminars on Saturday and Sunday.

Free Java for AmigaOS

Nordic Global made a surprise announcement at Amiga99 - Java for the Amiga! And best of all, the runtime package and developer package will be FREE!

Daytona is a complete Java 2 runtime system for AmigaOS, based on the "Java 2 Platform" by Sun Microsystems, Inc. Daytona is available FREE of charge.

DaytonaDEV is an add-on to Daytona. It is intended for developers who want to write their own Java programs, and compile them into Java byte code. DaytonaDEV is available FREE of charge.

Daytona PLUS is an independently developed add-on to Daytona that provides additional Amiga-specific features.

DaytonaPLUS is distributed as shareware and requires registration. Registration fee: to be announced. For more information please contact Holger Kruse, Nordic Global Inc. (kruse@nordicglobal.com, <http://www.nordicglobal.com/>). Projected release date of first public beta versions: summer 1999. Features are subject to change.

<<http://www.nordicglobal.com/daytona.html>>

NewTek To Release Amiga TVPaint!

NewTek surprised a lot of people at today's Amiga 99 Gateway Computer Show where it announced that it was going to release Amiga TVPaint, which inspired the PC Aura, for free beginning next Wednesday! NewTek has three representatives at the Amiga 99 show, where it is showing off TVPaint 3.59, the Video Toaster, and the Video Toaster Flyer. Beginning next Wednesday, for a limited time, NewTek will have TVPaint 3.59 downloadable from its Web site. Once a short survey is filled out, people will be allowed to download the full working version of TVPaint 3.59 for free. A CyberGFX compatible graphics card capable of displaying at least 256 colors is required to run the program as is Amiga O/S 3.0 or higher.

TVPaint is a three layer paint and compositing program that runs on the Amiga platform. It includes tools like Pen, Airbrush, Chalk, Pencil, Crayon, and cutout Brushes along with an easy to use scripting language for multiple task operations. There are over 2400 drawing and image processing combinations available. In addition, it includes the ability to do bump maps, smears, perspectives, blur, grain, and chroma key.

NewTek Confirms Opening Of Flyer Source!

NewTek has confirmed that within the next few weeks it will make public the majority of source code for its Video Toaster Flyer so that third party developers can better tie their products in with the Flyer code, which should result in better productivity for users.

According to NewTek's vice-president of marketing, Donetta Colboch, the purpose of the source code release is to "help advance the product line by making it available to the community of third party developer to help further promote Toaster/Flyer development."

NewTek's CEO, Tim Jenison, hinted that NewTek might release its source code at the San Diego Symposium event last weekend. Yesterday those hints were confirmed as fact. The release of the source code will not include the LightWave 3D portion of the Video Toaster Flyer. Most likely the source code will be made available via ftp, but at press time the details were still being worked out. The release of the source code does not affect NewTek's future Flyer development.

Mac OS X Server Embraces Open Source With Launch of Darwin

CUPERTINO, California--March 16, 1999--Apple Computer, Inc. today announced the launch of Darwin--the Open Source release of the Mac OS X Server operating system foundation. Mac OS X Server is the Company's new server operating system which combines the proven strength of UNIX with the simplicity of Macintosh. Darwin will be available free to developers in the next few weeks at (www.apple.com/darwin). With this announcement, Apple becomes the first mainstream operating system provider to release its source code to the public and base its system software strategy on Open Source technologies.

"The Open Source movement is revolutionizing the way operating systems evolve and Apple is leading the industry by becoming the first major OS provider to make it's core operating system available to Open Source developers," said Avie Tevanian, Apple's senior vice president of Software Engineering. "We look forward to working with

the Open Source community to enhance the feature set, performance and quality of our Mac OS X products."

Episode I: The Bandwidth Menace

TidBITS#471/15-Mar-99

Star Wars fans with visions of a galaxy far, far away can catch the new preview trailer for Star Wars Episode I: The Phantom Menace in QuickTime 3.0 format, thanks to an exclusive alliance between Lucasfilm and Apple. According to Apple, fans downloaded more than 1 million copies of the trailer and 600,000 copies of QuickTime 3.0 within the first 24 hours of the trailer's availability. If you have some time on your hands and a fast connection, you can view one of three versions: a 25 MB file measuring 480 by 216 pixels with stereo sound, a 13 MB file measuring 320 by 144 pixels with stereo sound, or an 11 MB file measuring 240 by 128 pixels with mono sound. The movie opens in theaters 19-May-99. [JLC]

<<http://www.starwars.com/episode-i/news/trailer/>>

<<http://www.apple.com/quicktime/trailers/fox/episode-i/>>

Iomega Recalls Jaz Power Supplies

TidBITS#471/15-Mar-99

Iomega Corporation is voluntarily recalling 60,000 power supplies which shipped with some external 2 GB Jaz drives and remanufactured external 1 GB Jaz drives purchased since 31-Aug-98. Essentially, some power supplies lack safety seals along the sides of their cases; without the seals, the cases may separate, exposing internal components and creating a risk of electric shock. Complete details of the recall program and how to determine whether your power supply is affected are available from Iomega's Web site. Jaz owners can request an exchange online or call Iomega's exchange hotline at 800/781-3296. Iomega will replace defective power supplies and provide pre-paid return packaging. According to Iomega, no one has been injured by these defective power supplies. [GD]

<<http://www.iomega.com/support/recalls/>>

The Humor Section

NEWS AI Signs up SONY'S PINDIAL

From the newsgroup: comp.sys.amiga.misc

Craig Sutton wrote:

AI have hired a top new maintenance man for their building. Mr. Eric Pindial former cleaner for Sony. When asked about his new position PINDIAL claimed he had signed a NDA but admitted he was looking forward to testing the new prototype Amiga integrated Floor Cleaning machine.

Roderick Mouthaan <roderick@xs4all.nl> wrote:

He further stated that he couldn't wait to fill the machine with the much rumoured Magical Mystery Soap. "This is going to revolutionize the way we look at floor cleaning", he added.

Asked for the markets they are targeting, Pindial stated: "Although we want it to clean the whole world, our initial focus will be on Germany and America, where the floors are the dirtiest. But remember that it is not just about floor cleaning! Just wait for our partners to be announced, you'll see that we're targeting a whole range of appliances in and around the house."

"Although I'm officially under NDA, I'll tell you that there'll also be an electrical toothbrush, which filled with the Magical Mystery Soap will make your teeth brighter and shinier than ever!"

Further official announcements are expected over the next few days.

Joe Cosby <joecosby@seatac.net> wrote:

For those of you keeping up with these developments, I just saw an article in the March "Technology Times".

Gateway have just named J.R. "Bob" Dobbs the president of the Pindial division.

I think we can all take this as very positive news, given Dobbs' history, NDI-wise.

Jim Euliano <jime@flatech.edu> wrote:

While maintaining several key "corporate secrets" about the new design, Pindial was able to reveal that the new system will in no way support traditional floor cleaning utilities. The Broom 2000, the Mop 4000, and even the Vacuum 1200 will not be compatible with the new units. Even having one of the older models in close proximity to the "Sweeper NG" will possibly cause it to malfunction.

Fourth Quarter profit margins are expected to be in the ten's of dollars after the release of the Sweeper NG.

[Editor's Note: Those familiar with Commodore Amiga history will recognize the reference to the now infamous floor scrubber auctioned off at the Commodore liquidation sale. Amiga Inc.'s new President Jim Collas should take serious note of the black humor in this stronghold of the Amiga faithful. Other responses elicited by the St. Louis show: when Petro Tyschtschenko is openly referred to as a "dork" and when IRC sharpshooters are exhorted to "Take the shot" when Jeff Schindler appears in their sights, Amiga Inc. has serious PR problems with those they profess to want on their side.]

The Macintosh Section

Move Over MTV, Now There's MP3

by Kevin Savetz <savetz@northcoast.com>

My foray into the world of MP3 music began not online, but while staring at the TV. A particular car commercial was airing for the hundredth time that night, featuring an infectious little song based on a tune called 88 Lines about 44 Women. I wanted to hear the song in its entirety and knew the Internet would be the key.

My musical craving would also mean a chance to play with MP3, a high-quality audio format that has become quite popular in some Internet circles.

A search of DejaNews revealed the tune I longed to hear was by a new wave band called The Nails. Finding that information was easy. Finding the song itself was another matter, involving a frustrating foray into the world of pirate Web sites that claim to offer free (although not legal) MP3 files. Ultimately I did find the song - legally - on the official Nails home page. My thirst for '80s new wave was quenched, but I learned volumes about MP3 in the process.

<<http://www.dejanews.com/>>

<<http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/dakaufman/nails.html>>

First Things First

MP3 stands for MPEG 1 layer 3: it's a file format for storing audio that can be replayed at near compact disc quality. The music sounds great. To my untrained ears, properly encoded MP3 files sound just as good as tunes from a CD. All it takes to play MP3 music is player software on your computer, which should be at least a PowerPC-based Mac (exact requirements vary by player). You also need something to listen to: MP3 files are available for download, or you can create them yourself from CDs you own.

Besides raw computing power, MP3 files require bandwidth and storage space. MP3 files weigh in at about one megabyte per minute of audio: your average pop song takes 3 or 4 MB; Arlo Guthrie's verbose Alice's Restaurant would run around 20 MB. In fact, MP3 files are amazingly small, taking up about 10 percent of the space of AIFF or other high-quality sound formats. (Like JPEG is to graphics, MPEG is a lossy compression format - some information is lost in encoding, but not enough that most people would notice.) If you're downloading MP3s, come armed with a fast connection or prepare for a long wait. Even if you're encoding the files yourself, make sure you have enough disk space.

Detailed information about MP3 and related file formats is available at the MPEG Archive. The site includes a brutally technical FAQ, player downloads for many platforms, and other information.

<<http://www.mpeg1.de/>>

Getting a Player

To hear your fabulous MP3 song files, you need an MP3 player.

Windows users enjoy a veritable cornucopia of MP3 players, but Mac users have fewer choices, including the popular MacAmp and SoundApp. MacAmp's interface resembles the front panel of a compact disc player, complete with track timer and equalizer blinky lights. There's also a playlist: you can drag your MP3 files onto the playlist and move them around to tweak the order in which they play.

SoundApp offers a simpler interface. Although it can play sounds of many types other than MP3, SoundApp includes only a rudimentary playlist feature. A list of other players for the Macintosh can be found at MP3.com's archive of Mac software.

<<http://www.macamp.com/>>

<<http://www-cs-students.stanford.edu/~franke/SoundApp/>>

<<http://www.mp3.com/software/mac/players.html>>

Downloading MP3s

There are two distinct types of MP3 files on the Internet - legal and illegal. Creators put legitimate MP3s online for you to enjoy: the people who own the copyright to the music have chosen to share. Legitimate MP3s songs are easy to find - and listening to them won't lead to an unsightly buildup of bad karma.

MP3.com reports that users downloaded more than two million songs from that site in September. According to the International Federation of Phonographic Industries, about 90 million MP3 files are downloaded each month - this presumably counts only legitimate ones.

The bad news? The mainstream recording industry hasn't embraced MP3, so legitimate recordings from well-known bands are rare. In fact, many people in the recording industry see MP3s as a major threat. Because it's so easy to create great-sounding MP3 files from a CD and share those files for free online, the recording industry stands to lose big bucks to do-it-yourself pirates who would rather trade songs than pay for a CD. So chances are your favorite Top 40 group isn't yet on the MP3 bandwagon.

That said, a few well-known artists and labels are experimenting with MP3. Among them are the Beastie Boys, Dionne Warwick, and Taylor Dayne. Some make selected tracks available for free to spur sales of CDs, while others take the next step of selling MP3 tunes directly via the Internet.

Most of the music on legitimate MP3 Web sites is from bands you've never heard, covering every genre from blues to techno. Just because you've never heard of these bands doesn't mean they're lousy - in fact, I've discovered some great music. Then again, there's a reason that others of these bands lurk in obscurity: they stink.

Two sites with massive collections of free, legitimate MP3 music files are MP3.com and the Internet Underground Music Archive. Both let you search for music by genre, but your findings will almost always be a crap shoot if you don't recognize band names. If you're interested in hearing new music and indie bands, this is a great way to do so. You'll be pleasantly surprised when you find a great song - but brace yourself for the truly bad ones.

<<http://www.mp3.com/>> <<http://www.iuma.com/>>

Illegal MP3s - music files shared without the permission of the copyright holders - also abound. If your favorite bands don't release MP3 music, folks on the Internet will do it for them. I could get on my soapbox and yammer about why piracy is wrong, but I won't. I'll just say this: trying to get music from pirate MP3 sites is a pain in the Hootie.

The sites are easy to find in search engines, but then you'll run into dead links galore, since ISPs quickly shut down such pirate sites.

Sites that do exist may only offer a handful of songs for download (but claim to have an archive of thousands). Other sites require you to upload a song for each one that you download. I'm no expert in the pirate MP3 scene, and maybe I don't know where to look, but two hours of searching the online backwaters yielded few MP3 files, none of which I even cared to hear.

An MP3 guru tells me Usenet is the tool of choice for receiving pirate MP3s, feeding two to three gigabytes of MP3 files daily, and accounting for more than 10 percent of all Usenet bandwidth.

Roll Your Own

Sharing copyrighted music is illegal, but it is legal to create MP3 files for your own use from CDs you own. Encoding a single song or an entire CD is simple if you're armed with a CD-ROM drive and encoding software. Creating an MP3 file from a CD track is a two-step process: first, you convert the CD audio to a file format native to the computer such as AIFF - this process is called ripping. Next, you convert that file to an MP3 file in a process called encoding. Depending on the software you use, ripping and encoding can be a one-step or two-step process.

You could rip your favorite tracks from otherwise forgettable CDs to create a "best of" MP3 mix folder. If you have removable storage like a Zip or Jaz drive, you could put those MP3 files onto a removable cartridge and enjoy your tunes whenever you're in the mood. (Giving copies of those files to anyone or uploading them to the Internet is copyright infringement.)

The only one-step Mac ripper/encoder I've found on the Internet is MPEG Audio Creator, which is easy to use. However, it can create only MPEG 1 layer 2 files (dubbed MP2), an older version and slightly larger version of the file format.

<<http://www3.pair.com/odreer/mpeg.html>>

Until someone writes a Mac MP3 ripping/encoding tool, creating true MP3 files requires two programs. You first use CDtoAIFF to create an AIFF file from a CD track. Then Mpecker Encoder turns that AIFF into an MP3 file.

<<http://www.musicglobalnetwork.com/Mac.html>>
<<http://www.anime.net/~go/mpeckers.html>>

Encoding an MP3 file is an intensive process, so be prepared to see a lot of the busy cursor.

There you have it: the story of how an incessant car commercial got me hooked on a forgotten '80s band, led me to learn more than I thought I wanted to know about MP3, and caused me to use every last bit of hard drive space to store countless music files. I gotta stop watching so much TV.

[Kevin Savetz writes about Macs and the Internet for Computer Shopper and other magazines. An avid collector of vintage computers, Kevin is as likely to be playing with an Atari 800 or Timex-Sinclair as with his Mac.]

[Source: TidBITS #455 / 16-Nov-98. TidBITS address is <http://www.tidbits.com/tb-issues/default.html>.]

The Amiga Section

The Continuing History of OS3.5

From the Team Amiga Mailing List and c.s.a.misc

Keith Blakemore-Noble <Amiga@computer.org> wrote:

3.5 was never "on then off then on again". OS3.5 was only "on" late in the day after sufficient pressure from users demanding 3.5. It has certainly not been "on, off and on again"...

Holger Kruse <kruse@nordicglobal.com> responded:

Looks like you don't have all the information. Let me provide some:

Plans for OS 3.5 go WAY back. The earliest time I was involved in them was summer 97, when a group of developers outlined a proposal for OS 3.5. It was accepted and endorsed by Petro and forwarded to Amiga Inc. There was no official, public announcement at the time, but OS 3.5 nevertheless was "on". Shortly after that Amiga Inc. signalled "no" -- "off again".

A few months later there was that famous agreement between [Haage & Partner] and Petro -- "on again". That was killed again by Amiga Inc., after lobbying by some Amiga developers -- "off again". Some members of ICOA were then officially appointed by Amiga Inc. (by the US side, NOT by Petro) to provide a counterproposal and cost calculation for OS 3.5, on behalf of Amiga Inc., i.e. Amiga Inc. very much wanted to produce OS 3.5 at that time -- "on again".

After a lot of details had already been worked out, those plans were then killed for the show in London -- "off again". After intense lobbying by Fleecy Amiga Inc. revived the plans for OS 3.5 -- "on again" -- at least until Fleecy was fired, and with him all of the pending agreements with developers Fleecy has helped work out -- "off again", at least for the developers involved.

At the show in Cologne Jeff [Schindler] then was very enthusiastic about a completely new OS 3.5, that was supposed to be much more comprehensive than in earlier plans, with completely new agreements on a much larger scope -- "on again, in a big way".

Only a few weeks later Amiga Inc. announced that those plans were already obsolete, by removing some of the most essential components (RTG and RTA) from the OS 3.5 proposal, which made some developers furious, and rightfully so. From that point on OS 3.5 seemed little more than a farce to me -- "still on, but only as a bad excuse". At least they still had control over it though.

Another few months later the people in charge of OS 3.5 at Amiga Inc. were reassigned, as part of the change in leadership at Amiga Inc., and control over OS 3.5 was turned over to Petro, who promptly outsourced it to H&P -- once again changing the direction OS 3.5 was supposed to go. Apparently H&P do not feel they have to honor any agreements Amiga Inc. made with developers in the past -- "still on, but who knows how..."

For the life of me I cannot honestly say that this sequence of decisions is indicative of any recognizable, logical overall strategy -- sorry.

>> PPC is the processor of choice,

*PPC was *never* the "processor of choice".*

You are, I presume, thinking of that "hardware FAQ" which was "released" by a former Alnc employee where he said the PPC was official, even though Alnc have always denied it was ever official (he also later said that was indeed the case, and that the "FAQ" was not really supposed to be released as it was not official).

So, PPC was never processor of choice, therefore that is one change which has not taken place.

There was more than just the "hardware FAQ". Amiga Inc. actually called several developers more than a month before the announcement, informing them that PPC would be the official new CPU. And, yes, that was official. The change away from PPC was made later after Alan was hired and wanted to change the direction.

*OS4 *WAS* the developer OS right from the start!!! Originally, there was to be a developer OS called OS4, then the final real OS called OSS.*

Not really... There are also the original plans for future OS versions announced at Cologne '97. They were quite different from the later OSSDev vs. OS5 scheme, not just in naming but also conceptually.

Sure, I agree Alnc have a lot to do, and could certainly have made things easier on themselves (e.g. by not having all the BIG hype

before WoA last year), but they are not as bad as some people think, IMHO.

I myself have been defending Amiga Inc. against criticism mostly from German developers for a long time, but have recently found myself running out of arguments. Whenever Amiga Inc. announces a strategy that appears to make sense and can be defended, they turn around shortly after that and either do not follow up on promises, or completely change the direction afterwards.

Personally, I no longer believe that there ever will be an AmigaOS 3.5 that is more than a collection of icons/backdrops bundled with some crippled versions of commercial software that H&P is already distributing separately. That is the exact opposite of the original plans. But let's wait and see what "demos" H&P will have in St. Louis...

Olaf Barthel <olsen@sourcery.han.de> wrote:

> It has certainly not been "on, off and on again"...

Sorry, wrong answer ;) The OS 3.5 project started life as a twinkle in Petro T.'s eye (which somehow managed to drop down his mouth and escaped), was picked up reluctantly by Amiga, Inc. who eventually hired a bunch of consultants to investigate and plan an update, then cancelled the project, then restarted the project after much pressure from users and developers, then came very, very, close to cancelling the project again at the WoA in Cologne, then restarted it again with ever so slightly changed directions. That's certainly not your original straight arrow path the project has taken so far.

Heiko Kuschel <hkuschel@mayn.de> wrote:

I was in contact with Mr. Haage about 2 weeks ago, and I got the feeling that he knows that a good and decent OS 3.5 is vital for the Amiga market. Despite everything else I've heard about OS 3.5 and all those different decisions, I think that here's a person who knows all these facts and really wants to make the best out of it. Seems to have a very high priority for him. And besides, H&P do make quality software, IMHO. :-)

That's the only hope I still have... :-/

Gary Peake <gpeake@texas.net> confirmed:

First, my impression is the same as yours. While they may have dropped some things from the OS3.5 rendition they are doing, H&P is also very cognizant of the fact that it will either sell well if done good or not at all if done badly. And they do make good software.

Second, the sequence of events as related by Olaf and Holger jive with my own personal knowledge of the sequence of events surrounding OS3.5 to date.

Jason Compton <jcompton@xnet.com> added:

According to Mr. Haage (he of Haage and Partner, who are running the OS 3.5 show) there are plans for future editions of the OS that could include the RTG/RTA that's missing, more bugfixes, a new ROM, and so forth--but he did stress that they were plans, not commitments.

User Group Reps meet with Amiga management at Amiga'99

Steven Folberg <rebbs@texas.net>
Central Texas Amiga Computing Society

Hi, Gang.

More on this topic to follow, but I just wanted everyone to know that Amiga '99 was great! :-)

The highlight for me (besides Eric Schwartz's animation demo!) was what happened on Saturday morning...

We had a fairly impromptu User Group Network breakfast meeting at 8 a.m.; it wasn't in writing anywhere so not that many folks knew

about it. In the end, there were around 9 of us there, including me, Wayne Hunt, Darreck Lisle, Robert "Lostman" Hamilton and a number of other nice folks. At the end of the meeting, Darreck and Wayne let us know that on Friday night, Jim Collas, the new Amiga President, had requested a "closed door" meeting with user group reps and other end users to discuss the state of Amiga and pick our brains for ideas.

Darreck rounded us up around 11 a.m. and we met (around 12 of us) with Jim Collas, Bill McEwen, Darreck Lisle, the new marketing guy (a Mr. Van Holle, I think) for nearly 1.5 hours! All through the meeting, Bill and the "new guy" (Wayne, what's his name again??) sat on the couch in the hotel room and scribbled notes like crazy! They were so attentive to us and so interested in our points of view that we were speechless for about the first 30 seconds after Jim Collas asked us what thoughts we wanted to share with him.

Without going into extensive details, topics discussed included:

- 1) How user groups might be used to locate current, former and "inactive" Amiga owners toward the end of compiling a comprehensive database to be shared with Amiga, Inc.
- 2) The need for constant updating of the AI website with all sorts of info, even the names and short bios of every new staffer hired (and they ARE hiring right now), the search for new facilities, and so on.
- 3) Regular (perhaps monthly) mailings to all user groups ("care packages," if you will) including exclusive goodies only for user group meeting members/attendees;
- 4) Possible creative strategies for making it easier for "classic" owners to obtain new hardware and software at good prices;
- 5) Things that AI may be able to do to enable "classic" developers with flagship products to continue to upgrade them (and thus survive) into the era of next generation Amiga development, while providing support to current "classic" owners;

And a lot of other stuff that I can't remember right now.

Two things were clear to me:

- 1) Jim Collas and the people he is hiring are "the real deal." He is genuinely interested in what we have to say and has an increasingly clear sense of what makes the Amiga community so special.
- 2) He and the other AI folks now understand that the classic community (and the classic machines) aren't "going away" as soon as the next generation machines are launched, nor SHOULD they go away (just as the Apple II, to use Collas' example, stuck around for several years after the Mac was launched). He kept referring to the Amiga user community as "heroic" and said that one of the reasons he and the other AI folks had miscalculated over the last 18 months is that the survival of a computing platform for 6 years after the end of product development was COMPLETELY UNPRECEDENTED in the history of the computer industry.

That's all I have for y'all for now. Wayne, does this atone for my previous silence on the list? :-)

Peace, and long live Amiga!

-- *"*Amiga* - because Bill Gates wants to know what you ate for breakfast."*

"It is not your job to complete the work, But neither are you free to abstain from it." -- R. Tarfon, Pirkei Avot

Robert Hamilton <cyber1@noel.pd.org>
Amiga Atlanta, Inc.

I want to second, third, and fourth Steven's post. The show was shockingly great!!

I was also part of the closed door user group meeting. Everything stated here IS VERY TRUE! (though it seemed unbelievable at the time)

The important thing that really made me have faith in them was that the issues that were decided at the meeting, were PUBLICLY announced at the Banquet later that day. This action for me was an attempt for them to "set in stone" *real* attention and a *real* course of action to support user groups.

This IS the year of action! I can say this with real confidence now.

This is our opportunity (your opportunity) to make a REAL difference in the community.

They DO want to know and they ARE listening!

I urge you to begin talking on this list and within your user group about what you want from both UGN and Amiga Inc. to do in assisting your groups.

Where to begin???

First step is to think hard about each topic that Steven has posted here and respond with specific ideas on how (if) you would like to see these items accomplished.

Next take the news to the streets!!!! Share all the news on this list and on the different Amiga news websites with your groups. Many people still don't know what's going on and NEED to be awakened!!

Also, make sure your club officers get on this list! *This is the ONLY global forum for user groups issues.* This is THE place for user groups to resolve their issues.

This is all for now. But there is definitely more to come!

I can only hope that the feeling of excitement that was at the show will spread in the community. The future looks bright and you can be apart of it!

Wayne Hunt <wayne@amiga.org>
Executive Director, User Group Network

To elaborate, or at least help Steven with the points he had, I was asked at the last minute to assemble no more than 12 people to meet face-to-face with Jim Collas "sometime Saturday afternoon" to represent the User Groups (and users) out there. This occurred at roughly 10:00pm Friday night.

8:00 Saturday morning, we had the UGN representative breakfast which lasted until about 9:30 or so, then found out from Darreck that it was to happen at 11am that morning. I made the invitation to the attendees there, then literally RAN around the hall and show floor searching out each and every user group president and UGN representative I could find to attend the meeting. If anyone wasn't included, it was not for lack of trying, it's simply the fact that I didn't run across you before I had found 12 other people. As for the rest, here's what we happened.

After hauling our own chairs from the King James conference room, we all squeezed into Mr. Collas' suite (boy did it get warm in there) to be greeted by Mr. Collas with "do you have any questions for us?" Oh boy was that ever an understatement! What followed was almost one and a half hours (overlapping the UGN luncheon) of feedback and discussion on several relevant subjects to include;

- the community

The Amiga staff there pointed out to us that they really would like to involve themselves fully in the existing community and in fact, become a part of it rather than simply "the company". JimC (who did most of the talking) pointed out to us that he's aware that Gateway has been screwing up and underestimating the Amiga community and they want to make amends by becoming not only the company, but "part of the community as well".

It was pointed out to the Amiga management that the public needs more news of every kind to come from the company. Not just "these are the specs and dates" type news, but all of it. It was suggested that;

- 1) they look into the production of a biweekly or monthly mailing to all of the User Groups which would contain giveaway trinkets and news updates. (similar to Gateway's "Prairie News" newsletter)
- 2) if they really want to start participating in the community, they might consider actively participating (when possible) in things like the UGN Mailing list.
- 3) let us know the personality details of the crew to make them a part of the community. Let us know who's hired and their background, etc.

4) include as news when AI goes out and talks to major third party companies.

5) it was suggested by several representatives (not me) that Amiga needs to really get on the ball as far as website updates and that they

a) make the .com a suitable, professional site

b) use the .net site for network services such as free web services to UG's and free e-mail to all (ala gateway.net)

c) use the UGN's .org site for all outgoing news to users and groups which didn't fit on the .com site.

6) we (the UGN) need to get our contact information verified and updated in the database so that each User Group could be contacted directly from Amiga Inc. with pertinent mailings, etc. It was also recommended that EACH user group update their own records and include the address information of each user, past and present for a private database which Amiga Inc would use to let people know that "something wonderful is happening" and to keep an eye on the Amiga.

- developers and dealers

We discussed several points of relevance where keeping developers involved was concerned. Jim Collas said they would (or were) consider a "sponsored development" (for lack of better terms) program whereby Amiga Inc could be petitioned by established developers for financial assistance to complete a project or upgrade in return for some percentage.

There were also various pointers about keeping dealers involved and perhaps Amiga Inc organizing discounts on products for Amiga User Groups through every available, relevant dealer (not just Amiga dealers, but major players such as Yamaha {speakers}, 3Com {modems and network cards}, and others.)

- In sum

Overall, most every point was designed to help every other part of the community (Amiga Inc., user groups, developers, and vendors) bring in both memberships and interest. It is also designed to stop the slow decline of interest in User Groups and the Amiga in general.

For the first time, as many there will attest, we really felt like Amiga Inc. was actually listening and very, VERY interested in what we had to say. During the meeting, we got the distinct impression that we were hearing Jim Collas thinking out loud and that a lot of the feedback we provided came as a profound surprise to them. A lot of "we should do this" and such. Later Sunday, I was approached by a management member who stated that he was told to "be sure this stuff happens" so I am actually psyched and waiting for stuff to happen.

***** Current status (just got off the phone)***** is that we (the UGN and Amiga.org) are going to shortly reach a formal agreement with Amiga Inc to handle and be recognized as the central location for Amiga Organizations as per number 5 above (the ICOA voted to move their website to Amiga.org Friday at the show). The mailings (#1 above) aren't expected to actually start until mid April, which will give the UGN time to get it's ducks in a row.

We need to start assembling and submitting user information to them ASAP.

Amiga Inc is also in the midst of moving their offices from South Dakota to San Diego which has all the staff tied up at the moment with logistics. Once the Agreement is reached to use Amiga.org for organizations, changes will start occurring and we will start seeing a lot more news items flowing from Amiga Inc as they've designated a staff member specifically to disseminating news to the community.

Feedback is welcomed,
Wayne Hunt

Gregory Donner <gdonner@xgate.hcjbeng.org>
Amiga Computer Enthusiasts of Elkhart, Indiana

One of the most important things Amiga Inc. can do right now, I feel, is apologize to several Amiga developers. Many of them have

been burned by the supposed OS 3.5 contract, and have become bitter as a result. One of these that comes to mind is Marc Albrecht of A.C.T.--as I understand it, he was told to meet Jeff Schindler at the Computer98 show in regards to 3.5, and there was no show by Mr. Schindler. No explanation, phone call, or even an e-mail contact to Marc has ever been made, even though Marc sent the full plans of RTA to Amiga Inc. I believe the Picasso96 team may also be in this same dilemma.

Marc Albrecht had a fully working version of RTA ready to go, but has since stated it will never run on OS 3.5 because of what happened in the past.

Whether or not an apology by Amiga Inc. could change his mind about RTA is another question, but it is the right thing to do. A little communication can go a long way in solving problems.

Darreck Lisle <lisle@amiga.com>
Amiga Inc.

I have talked to Marc and I am a huge fan of his sound card!
My 4K is running it and I want to get the add on cards for it. If it takes me sending him flowers and candy I will do it.
No kissing thou!

Gregory Donner <gdonner@xgate.hcjbeng.org>

> I have talked to Marc and I am a huge fan of his sound card!

I am too--and I also have an MPEGit! on order. :)

> My 4K is running it and I want to get the add on cards for it. If it takes me sending him flowers and candy I will do it.

Great! Whatever it takes--actions especially, though. Even an explanation of what happened and why may get him back developing for the Amiga again.

> No kissing though!

He *does* like Greek food, so if you can get him a voucher for a free meal there in Lamstedt, you'll be starting off on the right foot. :)

The CUCUG Section

February General Meeting

reported by Kevin Hopkins

The February 18, 1999 General meeting began with the traditional introduction of officers. President Lewis noted with some disgust that we were locked out of our meeting room tonight for the third time in two years. This on the heels of a 100% rate increase. Our displeasure was conveyed to the Park District officials.

Moving on, President Lewis spoke about the upcoming Gateway Amiga Show in St. Louis on March 12, 13 and 14. Jim said Don Shaffer has volunteered to man our booth, but Jim said he'd like to have another volunteer to help Don out. Let Jim know if you are interested. Jim said, for other members interested in attending the show, contact Kevin Hisel for tickets.

President Lewis then asked Kevin Hisel to update us on Amiga related news. Kevin said that there wasn't a lot happening. Amiga Inc. is quiet as usual. Kevin said he was reluctant to comment on anything else for fear of giving it any credence. One rumor is that Gateway is annoyed with the lack of progress at Amiga Inc. and that some actions may be taken. As for any other hard news, there is none since Amiga Inc. has clammed up. As a general comment though, Kevin said the Amiga community seems to be degenerating into a lot of name calling and back biting. The BoXeR motherboard replacement for the Amiga is still vaporware at this point.

Someone in the crowd prompted that Amiga Inc. had recognized us with their User Group Organization seal, one of only three in the world and the only one in North America. Someone else in the crowd

pointedly remarked that that and fifty cents could buy you a cup of coffee. Kevin noted that a significant acknowledgement had come when Urban Mueller had placed our link on Aminet.

Amiga Inc.'s developer machine is still vapor at this point as well. President Lewis then asked Kevin Hopkins what was in store for the Amiga SIG this evening and Kevin deferred to John Lynn who introduced his Toaster/Flyer system. John said it is a nonlinear editing machine, which, because it works in the digital medium, has no generational loss through the editing process. John said this evening he was going to have someone in the audience edit some video. Ed Serbe was volunteered by acclamation.

President Lewis turned to Richard Rollins for the monthly Macintosh news update. Richard stated that the five flavors of iMac are doing very well. He said Corel has shown some interest in porting the Corel Suite to the Macintosh due to its recent resurgence. Richard said several game developers have come back to the Mac.

Richard reported that Macworld will be in New York this year. Richard said the Mac SIG's presentation tonight would be a journey to the "dark side" as he would be showing a Microsoft product, Power Point.

Richard closed by saying he had brought in some information he'd received in the mail from Adobe and Orange Micro, maker of PC boards for the Mac, for anyone that might be interested. There was a little discussion on the Orange PC cards, noting that they use AMD K6-2 400Mhz processors.

The floor was then opened up for a Question and Answer Session. Selena Douglas offered a Mac Ghandi poster she had won to anyone who wanted it.

Rich Hall asked about a problem he was having with a new hard drive he had installed. Everything seemed to fine with the drive except that Norton 3.5 reported it encountered errors. At startup, it would ask if they should be fixed, Rich answered Yes, the corrections would be made, everything seemed fine, except that at shut down, Norton would again report a problem with the drive even though it had not been touched during the session. The consensus was that the problem lie with that version of Norton. Rich was advised to look for a patch or and update to his software.

Norris Hansel related a difficulty he had with the ATI Graphics Extension. He talked about his monitor problem and his discovery that Apple Display Software 1.6 is very sick. The solution was to remove displays.library and upgrade to Apple Display Software 1.7.1. Richard Rollins said Color Sync is the culprit.

Ed Hadley brought up a problem he had been having at work with Photoshop 5 and a new Epson printer. It was discovered that Photoshop 5 has a color conversion problem.

Norris Hansel spoke about OS8.5 and Adobe problems. He was advised to go to OS8.5.1 and upgrade to Acrobat 4.0. During this discussion, Selena Douglas said that what was being said solved a problem she was having in their office as well.

Revolving around the talk of the new MacOS 8.5.x, there was a short discussion on the philosophy of upgrading. In short, it boils down to "If it ain't broke, don't fix it." "Only upgrade if the new features will be of real use to you."

Selena Douglas related a story about the new platinum appearance in OS8.5 causing problems for a game her kids use. She ultimately had to shut it off to get the game to work. Richard Rollins theorized that the game was probably looking for a standard system font which was no longer available.

Richard Rollins said he would have to retract his statement of last month that the Mac didn't have a Y2K problem. It does. It's in the Microsoft program Outlook. Someone else piped up, saying "You mean Microsoft would put out a product that would corrupt another platform's reliability?" There was much laughter.

The Amiga SIG - John Lynn Puts the Flyer To Flight
reported by Kevin Hopkins

This evening John Lynn (jlvideo@pdnt.com) of JLVideo Productions demonstrated the ease and power of the Video Toaster/Flyer editing system. John first had Bill Zwicky and Greg Zalucha acted out some mock fisticuffs. As the action took place,

John shot the scene with a Super VHS camera, feeding it into his A4000 to make a digital master. As he worked, John commented that the quality of SuperVHS or High8 tapes is very good. He also stressed the importance of camera angles and lighting to the final quality of your video.

To show how simple his system is to use John selected a member of the audience to sit in the "driver's seat." Ed Serbe was elected. While Ed has a rather extensive knowledge of graphics and rendering, he's still a novice at this type of video work.

Revealing the hardware involved, John said he had three 9 gigabyte drives in his system: one for sound (with approximately 13 hours worth of sound capacity), one for raw video footage and one for his edited material. Jim Lewis, who sold John his drive set up, explained that it was a RAID system (Redundant Array of Inexpensive Drives) made up of three Seagate Barracuda drives.

As things progressed there was a discussion of the differences between rendering and transitions in real time. Asked about the software he is using, John said he is using the Video Toaster Flyer 4.2 software.

After shooting his video tape, as he would out in the field, John recorded the video tape into his machine. The raw footage had a Jim Lewis segment and the Bill Zwicky/Greg Zalucha segment shot from two different angles. John then showed Ed how to edit three selected clips from the raw footage. He then showed Ed how to add sound effects by moving the segment "croutons" or icons around. Mark Landman (mlandman@earthlink.net) of PM Productions, CUCUG's other video whiz, asked John if he was able to display the sound's waveform. John was not totally sure but he thought not. He believed it was available, however, through third party add-ons, such as the Pro Mix software. Mark said he was used to using Avid and Premier on his Macintosh system. He spoke about using time lines, which John said he was also familiar with.

John then cloned his edited work to make it run longer. John showed a Natalie Imbruglio video to point out how one can get ideas from the "pros". He was particularly impressed by a smoke effect and a broken mirror effect used in the music video. John mentioned Wavemaker and Club Toaster as other sources of good information.

John said the downfall of the Amiga is speed. He showed us a Lightwave rendering of a five second clip he had created in the style of the nine cell Brady Bunch opening screen. On the Amiga it took seven hours to render.

John then showed a Shania Twain video which contained quite a bit of video legerdemain.

Speaking to the future, John said that with the advent of networking he hopes to construct an interconnected render farm one day, letting each type of machine do what it does best.

The Macintosh SIG - Richard Rollins Shows PowerPoint
reported by Edwin Hadley (e-hadley@life.uiuc.edu)

The Question & Answer Section

The SIG started off with Rich Rollins warning us that there was a Y2K bug that affects the Mac. It is in the Microsoft Office application. It seems to be in the Excel portion of Office. He said there is a patch available at the MicroSoft website.

I went to the following website to see what Microsoft had to say: http://www.microsoft.com/technet/year2k/product/user_noncompliant.htm. Be prepared for a wait. And when you get to the product sites, you will have plenty to read. A bit like reading software licensing agreements or the fine print on the back of your credit card statements. Most of the problems seem to be with foreign language software.

For "Compliant with minor issues" info about Excel 5.0 for Mac go to this site: http://www.microsoft.com/technet/year2k/product/User_View68424EN.htm.

For general info about Microsoft software that is "Compliant with minor issues" got to this site: http://www.microsoft.com/technet/year2k/product/user_compliant.htm.

A question was asked as to whether it would be better to buy a new G3 or try beefing up the an old PowerPC with a G3 upgrade card. The

question comes down to a balance of information and costs. It's a two-edged sword.

The new G3s don't support the old style peripherals without adaptors. The new G3s are USB and Firewire based. The old PowerPCs were ADB, serial and SCSI based. They both use ethernet, the new G3 is MUCH faster. So if you have a lot of peripherals, you might want to stick with the old PowerPC and upgrade it with a G3 card.

A friend had a Power Computing clone (180mhz, I think). He added a G3 card rated at 266 mhz which he clocked up to 300 Mhz. (He has clocked it to 333 Mhz, but it tends to come to a screeching halt after a short period of time.) He swears by the modification.

Some of the G3 upgrade cards will not be supported by the upcoming system software changes. But some of them can make an old PowerPC a very viable machine.

If you are not loaded down with old peripherals, though, it would probably be best to go for the new G3.

Rich suggested pricing the variations out as much as possible and then toss in the cost of new peripherals and/or adapters for the old peripherals. You should be able to make the decision much easier. It will never be a clean, clear decision, but it can be made easier with a little research.

Rich passed along his personal recommendations of "ultracool" to the Apple 15" flat panel display. The display is "beautiful!" And he again sang praises to the iMac's 56k internet connection capabilities. "The iMacs scream on the internet!"

Two rumors were passed around and examined for a few minutes:
- One being that some older (604e) machines are able to be upgraded to OS X easier than, say, the 601 chips.
- The other being that OS X won't work on anything but G3s. Right now I can't remember if anything was mentioned to either squash or support these rumors.

A question was raised about the recent ruling in the courts regarding Apple's Customer Support. The person had heard the Apple had been required to continue customer support on Macs for free. Rich said that this ruling relates to specific models of Macs. Mainly the "all-in-one" Macs (Performas?). Apple offered free customer support in so many words then changed their mind and now Apple has to live up to it's promise.

The Main Show

Rich Rollins then set about demonstrating Microsoft's PowerPoint presentation software. Rich is a reluctant MS user. He definitely feels as if he is dabbling in the "dark side" when using Microsoft products. Here, it is PowerPoint 98. He is using it because the music director at his church uses it for services and, seeing as how Rich is a veritable Mac whiz ..., he was tapped to tend to the application.

There used to be several presentation software packages out there in the wild, woolly world. There was Aldus Persuasion on the Mac side and several others on the PC side. But Aldus wimped out and dropped support of Persuasion, later Aldus itself wimped into nonexistence. This is a crying shame. Since Persuasion was dropped, PowerPoint has become the only presentation software for the Mac, which leaves us at the mercy of the Redmond, WA juggernaut. (Maybe this will change with the recent resurgence of Apple.)

Microsoft's PowerPoint is a mixed bag. It has a number of features like playing Quicktime movies in your presentation, fancy bulleted text, flying text, moving text, sound elements, slide transitions, object graphics, lots of pre-made layouts and backgrounds. They also supply pre-made presentation outlines. You can publish your classroom or business presentation to the Internet through Netscape or Internet Explorer. Another feature is a graphing and chart program included in the package. When you need a chart or graph, you can choose one of the chart slide templates, double click and up pops a chart generator. You make your chart and, when you are done, it is placed on the slide in your presentation. You can also use a "highlighter pen" that allows you to "scribble" on the screen like they do on the "big-time" football programs. You can set slide shows up for user interaction or on a timer basis. These features are being used more and more in educational and informational presentations and exhibits.

February Board Meeting

reported by Kevin Hopkins

In the slide sorter window, you can review the presentation in thumbnail versions. It allows you to add, remove and reorder your slides. Persuasion had this feature as well, so it isn't unique, just very handy. One caveat, though. If you save your presentation in the "slide sorter" mode you run the risk of losing the whole presentation if there is a file corruption problem. By saving your document in the individual slide mode, you can avoid most of this problem. You will most likely lose the slide that the presentation was saved on, but the rest of them should be OK.

Some downsides to the program.

It has a "cryptic" interface, says Rich. And "terrible" documentation. Rich complained of procedures described with important steps left out, comments about procedures that were not mentioned again - anywhere. Microsoft has not been consistent with their version upgrades. This is true for both sides of the personal computer realm. But, mainly, it is a MICROSOFT product!

I have had the "opportunity" to work with PowerPoint for sometime now. I work at the Artist Service of the School of Life Sciences, we use it for running slides to a film recorder for 35mm slide production. We have some different sort of requirements for the software than would Rich's church or someone using it for print media. Our biggest complaints come from the fact that only the basic mouse movements have corresponding keystrokes. The interface is anything but intuitive or friendly. Couple that with bad documentation and you get extreme headaches and a whole new set of "expletive deleted." Also, the pre-made backgrounds are doing unpredictable things in our slide rendering software. A light blue image on a dark blue background might turn yellow or orange in the final slide. Whether it is a problem with PowerPoint or RasterPlus, the rendering software, we haven't figured out yet.

During the demonstration, Rich showed us a simple presentation that featured some of the main features. It started with a simple background with the Apple logo on it. Then from the right side of the monitor came lines of text mentioning the main features of PowerPoint. Then, after showing us the list of features, he turned to the Quicktime movie feature of PowerPoint. This was a commercial based on the movie 2001. The HAL 9000 computer "eye" stares at you while HAL's voice talks about the Y2K problem and how computers weren't to blame - it was really the programmers' fault. It finishes with the line "You like your Macintosh better than me, don't you Dave?"

After showing us the presentation, Rich set about showing us how he created it. Things went along pretty well. He recreated most of the presentation. Rich said that one problem he saw was that, if you insert a image into a page, resize it and the image is too small, you have to delete the file and then resize it again. He tried to insert a TIFF image file into a PowerPoint slide for us. It wouldn't recognize the file. After futzing around a bit, he found a PICT image file that would work. But maybe because of the futzing or maybe just because it's Microsoft, PowerPoint crashed. Rich admitted he had not done a "complete" installation of the program - partly due to time constraints, and so, this might be the cause of the trouble. At my place of work, I haven't noticed PowerPoint being any less stable than other Mac software. (I did have a bit of trouble copy/pasting into Freehand 8 from MS Word (Office98). It changed all the text to Japanese, including the Freehand pulldown menus, THEN it crashed the computer - a very bizarre crash by any standards).

It is a pretty good piece of presentation software. But more importantly, it is the only current presentation software for the Mac right now. So being the only game in town does have it's benefits. I truly wish there was something out there to give Microsoft a run for the money. There are people that want it, but no one has answered the call, yet. (I would really like to get all that MS stuff off my work computer.)

For "Compliant with minor issues" info about PowerPoint 98 for Mac go to this site - http://www.microsoft.com/technet/year2k/product/User_View15723EN.htm

The February meeting of the CUCUG executive board took place on Tuesday, February 23, 1999, at 7PM, at Kevin Hisel's house. (For anyone wishing to attend - which is encouraged, by the way - the address and phone number are both in the book). Present at the meeting were Jim Lewis, John Lynn, Jim Huls, Richard Hall, Richard Rollins, Mark Landman, Emil Cobb, Kevin Hopkins, and Kevin Hisel.

Jim Lewis: Jim began the meeting by thanking Kevin Hopkins for taking over the Amiga SIG.

There was an addressing of the issues involved in a dispute between the AWD and a particular user group's website. There was a review of the history surrounding the "other web directory," whose banner is displayed on the website in question, for those on the Board not familiar with that history.

John Lynn: John said he would be bringing in his Toaster/Flyer system for the February Amiga SIG meeting. John said he would be pulling someone out of the audience and have them editing in 10 minutes. Kevin Hopkins gave a short review of what the Amiga SIG ha done at the last meeting. John said he was sorry he missed the meeting, but he had been called away on business.

Jim Huls: Jim said he had nothing to say.

Richard Hall: Rich said he had nothing either.

Richard Rollins: Richard thanked Quentin Barnes for his PaperPort demonstration at the last Mac SIG meeting. Rich Hall commented that Text Bridge looked like a very interesting program. Richard Rollins said he had discussed worms and viruses. He said he would tentatively be doing Power Point next month.

President Lewis asked if we need to upgrade the club's Macintosh hardware yet. Richard said that it wasn't necessary.

There was a discussion of Intel's public relations problem due to its recent announcement of embedded identification numbers in its PIII processors. The fires of individual liberty grew quite heated over this perceived creeping assault on personal privacy.

Richard discussed the presentation of our last bill to Advancenet. Jim said it would be dealt with.

Richard closed by saying "The Mac is doing well. The game makers are coming back."

Mark Landman: Mark reported that he and Rich Hall would be transferring the Treasurer's material this weekend.

Richard Rollins asked about our CD plan. Mark said it was one of the final things he wanted to address before the transfer.

Mark reported that he had paid the room rent for the upcoming year at the Bresnan.

He stated that the internet domain name had been taken care of for the year. Jim recommended that we look into handling this for a multi-year tenure.

President Lewis then thanked Mark for his years of service as our Treasurer.

Emil Cobb: Emil reported that we had 23 members at the last meeting.

Kevin Hopkins: Returning to the website dispute, Kevin proposed a compromise solution, but it was not supported.

Kevin delivered an updated copy of the database to Kevin Hisel, for his and the President's use.

Kevin reported that the Bloomington-Normal Computer Users Group had sent us notification that they have dissolved their group effective January 1, 1999.

Kevin delivered the most current mail receipt to Mark Landman for deposit.

Kevin stated that we need a review mechanism for our Kagi receipts.

Kevin concluded his segment by reporting that CUCUG finished the year with 761 members.

Kevin Hisel: Kevin brought up the topic of the local raffle. He said with the current state of the Amiga market, it is bound to impact our efforts. Regarding the raffle, "You can't change reality. It's time to put it to rest." We will direct our efforts to web support.

There was a review of our membership information with a view of how to serve our members' interests.

CUCUG

CUCUG is a not-for-profit corporation, originally organized in 1983 to support and advance the knowledge of Champaign-Urbana area Commodore computer users. We grown since then.

Meetings are held the third Thursday of each month at 7:00 p.m. at the Bresnan Meeting Center in the Champaign Park District Headquarters (398-2550). The Center is located at 706 Kenwood, 1/2 block south of the corner of Kenwood and John Street, in west Champaign. Kenwood is the fourth north-south street off of John as you are going west, after crossing Mattis. The Center is in the northwest corner of Centennial Park, northwest of Centennial High School.

Membership dues for individuals are \$20 annually; prorated to \$10 at mid year (\$25US outside the U.S. and Canada; prorated to \$15 at mid year).

Our monthly newsletter, the Status Register, is delivered by the postal service or email at the member's choice. All recent editions are available on our WWW site. To initiate a user group exchange, just send us your newsletter or contact our editor via email. As a matter of CUCUG policy, an exchange partner will be dropped after three months of no contact.

This newsletter was prepared with PageStream 2.22 on an Amiga 3000 25/100 and output to an HP Laserjet IIP ~~plus~~. Pagestream was donated to CUCUG by Soft-Logik Publishing Corporation.

For further information, please attend the next meeting as our guest, or contact one of our officers (all at area code 217):

- | | | |
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| http://www.cucug.org/mac/index.html | Mac Web Directory |

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